DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 445 212 CE 080 668

AUTHOR Relave, Nanette
TITLE Promoting Employment Retention.
INSTITUTION Welfare Information Network, Washington, DC.
SPONS AGENCY Annie E. Casey Foundation, Baltimore, MD.; Mott (C.S.) Foundation, Flint, MI.; David and Lucile Packard Foundation, Los Altos, CA.; Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, New York, NY.; Ford Foundation, New York, NY.; Woods Fund of Chicago, IL.; McKnight Foundation, Minneapolis, MN.; Administration for Children and Families (DHHS), Washington, DC.; Department of Labor, Washington, DC.
PUB DATE 2000-07-00
NOTE 14p.
AVAILABLE FROM For full text: http://www.welfareinfo.org/issuenotepromotingemploymentretention.htm.
PUB TYPE Collected Works - Serials (022) -- Information Analyses (070)
JOURNAL CIT Issue Notes; v4 n9 Jul 2000
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adult Education; Agency Cooperation; *Agency Role; Career Counseling; Counseling Services; Delivery Systems; Demonstration Programs; Employment Patterns; *Employment Services; Guidelines; Human Services; Innovation; Job Placement; *Labor Turnover; Program Development; Program Implementation; *Public Agencies; Public Policy; Social Science Research; *Social Support Groups; Strategic Planning; Theory Practice Relationship; *Welfare Recipients; World Wide Web
IDENTIFIERS Preemployment Skills; *Temporary Assistance for Needy Families; Welfare Reform; Welfare to Work Programs

ABSTRACT

This document examines policy and program issues related to promoting employment retention among recipients of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) who have moved from welfare into employment. The document begins with background information about the work requirements and time limits affecting TANF recipients. The second section discusses the following program and policy issues: (1) the importance of retention services in the context of welfare reform; (2) individuals who should be targeted for retention services; (3) strategies promoting steady employment (preemployment services, job placement that focuses on good jobs, support services, work supplements and work incentives, postemployment services); (4) when retention services are required; (5) how retention services should be delivered; (6) available funding for retention services; and (7) ways agencies can engage employers in retention services. The third section presents a brief overview of the findings of research on the effectiveness of various strategies for promoting employment retention among welfare recipients and low-wage workers. The document's final section describes successful strategies and programs that have been implemented in the following areas: Denver, Colorado; Florida; Massachusetts; Bergen County, New Jersey; Rhode Island; and New York City. The bibliography lists the 8 resource Web sites and 14 publications. (MN)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 445 212

Promoting Employment Retention

Welfare Information Network
Issue Notes
Volume 4, no. 9 July 2000

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

CE 080 066 P

WELFARE INFORMATION NETWORK

Issue Notes

Vol. 4 No. 9 July 2000

Promoting Employment Retention

by Nanette Relave

Background

Welfare reform has spurred state and local agencies to move Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients from welfare into employment. With work requirements in effect and time limits pending, TANF agencies now face the challenge of helping current and former welfare recipients stay employed. The transition to steady employment is often difficult. Personal and family issues, employment-related concerns, low-paying jobs, and limited work supports can result in unstable employment and a return to welfare.

This *Issue Note* describes strategies that can help current and former recipients move to steady employment. It also examines some key issues in delivering employment retention services. "Employment retention" refers to attachment to the workforce over time, not simply retention in a single job. Although this paper focuses on retention, retention and career advancement are interrelated strategies to help families achieve long-term self-sufficiency. A forthcoming *Issue Note* will address skills enhancement and career advancement issues.

With substantial resources and the flexibility to use them creatively, TANF agencies have an opportunity to develop strategies for employment retention and self-sufficiency for current and former welfare recipients and, more broadly, for low-wage workers. For more information on strategies that promote retention and advancement objectives, see an earlier Welfare Information Network (WIN) *Issue Note* "Job Retention and Career Advancement for Welfare Recipients," available at http://www.welfareinfo.org/issueretention.htm.

Policy and Program Issues

Why are retention services important in the context of welfare reform? The time-limited nature of assistance under welfare reform creates the need for retention services to help individuals move to steady employment and avoid long-term welfare dependency. The transition from welfare to work is challenging for many recipients. Personal and family issues; employment-related concerns, such as limited skills and work experience, low pay, and nonstandard hours; and difficulties with child care, transportation, and housing can all interfere with maintaining employment. Parents must balance the demands of family and work, and they may have little personal or social support. In addition, the costs of working can be high—(e.g., for child care, transportation, and work clothes), while reductions in other benefits can leave families strapped for cash. Under welfare reform, TANF agencies must also help clients with multiple and persistent barriers to employment move into the workforce.

The Finance Project -- Barry Van Lare, Executive Director
Tel: 202-628-5790 -- Website: www.welfareinfo.org -- Email Address: welfinfo@welfareinfo.org

Given the challenges that many recipients confront in going to work, it is not surprising that job loss is common, while steady, full-time employment occurs less frequently. Many recipients lose their jobs quickly, and spells of unemployment are often long. Studies have shown that about one-quarter of recipients who become employed stop working within three months, and at least half are no longer working within one year. Retention services that address barriers to employment, that make work pay, and that equip recipients with job-related skills are vital to helping recipients avoid cycling on and off welfare and avoid long-term dependency. In addition, employment retention is key in moving toward self-sufficiency. See the how-to guide *Steady Work and Better Jobs* (Strawn and Martinson, 2000) for more information on policies and practices that encourage steady employment and access to better jobs.

Who should be targeted for retention services? Many individuals moving from welfare to work, as well as other low-wage workers, could benefit from employment retention services. The challenge for TANF agencies is to use their resources, including staff time, effectively. One option is to provide certain retention services more broadly and target more intensive and costly services to individuals with specific needs. Certain services, such as reemployment assistance and outreach on benefits available to low-income families can be made available to all recipients moving into the workforce and to other low-wage workers. Other services, such as intensive case management, supported work, and wage subsidies, can be targeted to individuals who are likely to lose their jobs and who are at risk of unstable employment.

The literature on employment retention suggests that job characteristics (e.g., wage, benefits, and hours), support service arrangements, and personal characteristics can be used to identify individuals in need of more intensive services. See *Employment Experiences of Welfare Recipients Who Find Jobs: Is Targeting Possible?* (Rangarajan, Schochet, and Chu, 1998) for guidance on assessing the feasibility of targeting clients for retention services and on developing a targeting strategy. Decisions about targeting services will guide which services are provided and how they are delivered.

What strategies promote steady employment? To help clients stay employed, both pre- and post-employment services are essential. Agencies need to consider what services are currently available, how to build a retention focus into current services, and whether current services are accessible to working families. Then they can develop programs to fill the gaps. Working with community-based organizations, providers, and employers is an important part of this effort. When providing services, programs should try to assess clients' needs. Some clients can stay employed with only a little help, while others need more intensive services. Finally, agencies must market their programs to clients, working families, and employers.

Clients with multiple and persistent barriers to employment may need more long-term and intensive services to move into employment. Their attachment to the workforce is likely to be incremental. Thorough assessments of employment barriers; referrals to specialized providers; provision of basic skill development, work experience, and job search activities; and increased work supports may benefit this clientele (Strawn and Martinson, 2000). For more information on serving this population, see the WIN *Issue Note* "The Hard-to-Place: Understanding the Population and Strategies to Serve Them," available at http://www.welfareinfo.org/hardto.htm.

Pre-employment services. Pre-employment services that prepare recipients for the world of work are important not only for job placement but also for job retention. To promote retention, programs should provide "soft skills" and life skills training. Soft skills are interpersonal and problem-solving skills. Employers value these skills highly among entry-level workers, and a lack of soft skills often contributes to job loss. Life skills, such as money management, contingency planning for child care and transportation, and goal setting, prepare recipients to cope with some of the challenges of going to work.

Under welfare reform, many pre-employment programs focus on rapid job placement. However, programs that provide a mix of job search assistance and education and skills training are more likely to help recipients move into better jobs, which is important for employment retention. Pre-employment programs should create a workplace environment that acculturates recipients to workplace norms, such as punctuality, appropriate dress, and respectful communication. A focus on the culture of employment can also reveal potential employment barriers and difficulties with workplace behavior. The pre-employment stage also is a good time to familiarize clients with post-employment benefits and services available to them once they start working.

Job placement that focuses on good jobs. Research indicates that recipients who obtain good jobs—full-time jobs with higher wages and employer-provided benefits—are more likely to sustain employment. Job placement affects employment retention. Agencies interested in using job placement to promote employment retention need to recognize that a work-first approach of placing people in the first available job may fail to match clients with good jobs. Placement in good jobs requires in-depth understanding of clients' needs and abilities as well as knowledge of local labor market conditions.

Placement staff can use assessment tools and interviewing techniques to identify clients' needs, abilities, career interests, and potential employment barriers. Staff must also develop relationships with employers and use labor market information to identify industries and occupations that have better jobs and opportunities for advancement. All of this information can be used to promote a good job match that includes consideration not only of wages and benefits, but also consideration of location, hours, opportunities for skill development and advancement, and other factors. For TANF agencies, this type of job placement activity may require staff training, smaller caseloads, or other organizational changes. In addition, agencies can use incentives and performance measures to emphasize client placement in good jobs (Strawn and Martinson, 2000).

Support services. Services that address child care, transportation, health insurance, and housing needs can help individuals stay employed. Some agencies may already provide or fund such support services, but improvements in outreach and service delivery can improve retention. Other agencies may need to develop or expand services to meet the needs of working families. Increasing awareness of support services and transitional benefits is critical because many families are not aware of and are not using these supports. Staff should begin marketing support services before employment. Agencies can involve employers and community-based organizations in efforts to reach out to individuals outside of the TANF system.

Services and benefits must be accessible to working families. Agencies can simplify applications and continuing enrollment procedures, have benefits staff available evenings and weekends, and co-locate benefits staff with staff of other organizations. Many families that are making the transition from welfare to work, as well as other low-wage workers, need support services for extended periods to maintain steady employment. Agencies could consider providing benefits and subsidies based on income levels, rather than length of time after leaving welfare (Strawn and Martinson, 2000).

To enhance retention among low-wage workers, human services agencies can develop partnerships with other agencies, providers, and employers to address any gaps in service delivery. For example, agencies could work with child care providers to expand child care during nonstandard hours, or they could partner with local transportation authorities to develop reverse commuting options. For ideas on expanding access to health insurance, see the WIN *Issue Note* "State Options to Increase Health Insurance for the Working Poor," available at http://www.welfareinfo.org/janjune.htm.

Wage supplements and work incentives. Given the financial difficulties associated with low-wage work, strategies that make work pay by, for example, supplementing wages can affect clients' ability and willingness to stay employed. Evaluation results show that programs with financial work incentives can promote sustained employment. Wage supplements help families meet financial needs and encourage work. Earned income tax credits and earnings disregards are specific strategies to supplement wages. Agencies can work with employers and community-based organizations to promote federal and state earned income tax credits.

Wage supplements can be implemented inside or outside the TANF cash assistance program. When providing supplements inside the cash assistance program, such as earnings disregards, agencies need to pay attention to the interaction with time limits. Under welfare reform, states have the flexibility to use funds for wage supplements outside the cash assistance program (Strawn and Martinson, 2000). For example, states could provide a wage subsidy to eligible working families using separate state funds. Agencies can also supplement family income by promoting participation in the Food Stamp program and by implementing child support pass-through programs.

Wage supplements are not the only type of work incentive. Agencies can use financial and nonfinancial incentives to reward the behaviors and outcomes associated with steady employment. Along with financial incentives (e.g., cash or gift certificates for needed products or services), incentives that reinforce clients' self-esteem (e.g., personal recognition awards or certificates of achievement) can motivate clients to maintain employment. For a discussion of behavior-based incentives that can promote beneficial workplace behaviors, see *Using Incentives to Promote Job Retention and Advancement: Guidance from the Performance Improvement Industry* (Hill and Pavetti, 2000). Agencies can also use incentives with program staff and vendors to encourage a focus on retention. Performance measures and performance-based contracting can emphasize employment retention outcomes.

Post-employment services. Post-employment services can help individuals stabilize in employment and deal with crises that could lead to job loss. The first few months of employment are a critical time for new workers, so post-employment follow-up is a challenging and time-consuming undertaking. Individuals who are trying to balance work and family responsibilities will have little time for program participation and may avoid contact with the welfare system. Program flexibility, outreach to community resources, creative communication, and staff availability are organizational developments that can facilitate contact with clients.

Case management is a common post-employment service. To support new workers, case managers can arrange or refer clients to services, provide needed encouragement and support, and build skills in contingency planning, goal setting, and other life skills. Case managers need to have access to a wide range of resources and to have working relationships with other staff and programs. The Postemployment Services Demonstration was the first major demonstration program to examine the effectiveness of case management in promoting job retention for newly employed welfare recipients, and the evaluation findings offer important lessons for post-employment programs. See the section on Research Findings for an overview of these findings.

Other post-employment services that support steady employment include financial assistance in emergency situations, mentoring and community support programs, reemployment assistance, and career advancement initiatives. A poll by the Welfare to Work Partnership indicates that mentoring can have a significant, positive impact on work performance and job retention. Agencies can work with employers or community volunteers to arrange mentoring programs. Support groups are other valuable sources of encouragement, advice, and recognition that agencies can sponsor.

Job loss is common in the transition from welfare to work, so rapid reemployment assistance is vital in helping individuals sustain employment and avoid a return to the welfare rolls. Rapid reemployment assistance can be provided without requiring a return to cash assistance. Agencies can also consider providing some support services to job seekers. It is important to help clients understand and address the reasons for their job loss and move on quickly to job placement activities. Reemployment assistance needs to be accessible to clients who have lost jobs and to those who are working. Clients should be made aware of resources available in the community, such as one-stop career centers. Agencies can also develop resource rooms to assist job seekers. Reemployment assistance can also help low-wage workers change jobs to enhance their skills and advance. Along these lines, career advancement initiatives, while relatively new for human services agencies, are another key to employment retention because clients are more likely to stay in good jobs with growth opportunities.

When should retention services be provided? Retention efforts should begin before employment. Agencies can build a retention focus into their employment preparation and placement programs. They need to inform clients about post-employment services and benefits during pre-employment and placement activities. Clients at risk of job loss can be targeted for more intensive services.

If possible, the transition to post-employment programs and staff should begin before employment. Relationships and trust are built over time and influence clients' willingness to use services. The first months of employment are a high-risk period for job loss, so follow-up and post-employment services should be more intensive to help clients stay employed or recover quickly from job loss. Hard-to-serve clients may need longer-term services to stabilize in the workforce. Rangarajan (1998) suggests ensuring the availability of services for at least six months of steady employment and for longer periods for those who lose jobs. Agencies need to ensure that clients and working families are aware of services and benefits through aggressive outreach.

How should retention services be delivered? Agencies have several options for delivering retention services and can combine approaches and settings. How services are delivered is related to what services are currently available. TANF agencies could provide some retention services themselves, which can facilitate the transition from pre- to post-employment services. TANF staff are well positioned to resolve benefits problems and to link clients with agency-provided supports.

Services can be provided onsite or by out-stationing staff at community-based organizations, one-stop career centers, or work sites. One option is to create a separate unit in the TANF agency to handle employment and retention services. This approach affords greater flexibility and some distance from the cash assistance program (Rangarajan, 1998). For the TANF agency to deliver retention services, staff training, greater program flexibility, and other changes may be needed.

Welfare agencies have limited experience in developing relationships with employers. Moreover, former recipients may avoid contact with the welfare system. Consequently, agencies sometimes look to intermediaries to engage employers, connect with clients, and provide specialized services. Neighborhood-based organizations are accessible to clients and their families, while workforce development agencies have established relationships with employers. These agencies may have a more flexible structure that accommodates working families, though their staff must understand the welfare bureaucracy. Whatever combination of service approaches is used, it is vital that all staff are working toward the same goals for clients (Strawn and Martinson, 2000) and that agencies work together to avoid service fragmentation.

What funding is available for retention services? Welfare-to-Work grants, TANF funds, state maintenance of effort (MOE) funds, and Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funds can all be used to

support retention-oriented services. A recent study of the Welfare-to-Work grants program (Nightingale et al., 2000) found that most grantees have begun to develop job retention services. There is no limit on how long Welfare-to-Work funds can be used for an individual participant, so services can continue for one or two years after employment.

The TANF regulations give states considerable flexibility to support employment retention. With declining caseloads, states have additional funds to develop or expand retention services. TANF and MOE funds can support a wide range of workforce development services and, for working families not receiving cash assistance, support services such as child care can be provided without triggering the requirements related to TANF assistance (Strawn and Martinson, 2000). In addition, states can set different financial eligibility criteria for different types of benefits. This would enable them to provide work supports, such as retention services and transitional benefits, to a broader group of working families.

The Workforce Investment Act is creating a new system to deliver employment, retention, and advancement services to adults. WIA performance measures will hold providers accountable for retention and wage progression outcomes.

How can agencies engage employers in retention efforts? To engage employers in retention efforts, agencies should understand and respond to the needs of local employers. High turnover is a costly problem for employers, and TANF agencies can help. Preparation for entry-level employment, extended case management, transitional benefits, and other services are valuable assets realized upon hiring TANF recipients and help keep workers on the job. Agencies need to market their retention services and supports to employers. Partnering with the state or local chamber of commerce or other local business associations to develop outreach materials can give agencies credibility.

It is critical that agencies develop relationships with employers who hire entry-level workers. This enables agency staff to learn about employers' needs and local labor market conditions. It also provides an opportunity for staff to educate employers about the needs of low-wage workers, the economics of job turnover, and the retention services and supports the agency can provide. Agencies can work with employers to modify or develop programs, such as employee assistance programs, mentoring, job coaching, and supervisor training, that provide workplace solutions to some of the challenges facing new workers and low-wage workers. Agency staff can also intervene directly to address workplace issues but should be mindful that many current and former TANF recipients do not want to be associated with the welfare system. Developing workplace programs that serve all entry-level workers avoids this stigma. When working with employers, agencies need to provide easy access to information and services, for example, by having a single point of contact and simplified administrative procedures.

Research Findings

The Postemployment Services Demonstration (PESD) was the first major demonstration program to examine the effectiveness of providing case management to newly employed welfare recipients as a way to promote job retention. PESD operated in Chicago, Illinois; Portland, Oregon; Riverside, California; and San Antonio, Texas, between 1994 and 1996. Although the PESD evaluation found that services had little effect on increasing earnings, reducing welfare, or promoting self-sufficiency, the demonstration offers valuable lessons. Key recommendations for programs considering providing job retention services based on PESD experiences are to target clients appropriately for different types of job retention services, simplify service delivery mechanisms, form closer links with employers, and assess carefully what services are currently offered and make changes to fill current

gaps in the system (Rangarajan and Novak, 1999). Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., which evaluated the PESD programs, is also evaluating employment retention efforts under welfare reform in Pennsylvania. (see http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/pittsburgh.htm).

There is a growing body of literature on the effects of financial work incentives on employment and income. Studies on the Earned Income Tax Credit have found that the credit has a strong effect on increasing the workforce participation of single mothers. New reports from the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation on the Minnesota Family Investment pilot program and the Canadian Self-Sufficiency project, initiatives with financial incentives and work mandates, document increases in stable and full-time employment. For more information on strategies that make work pay for low-wage workers, see the Making Wages Work web site at http://www.makingwageswork.org/.

There is limited research on the effects of different types of employment retention strategies for welfare recipients and low-wage workers. The Administration for Children and Families of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is launching the Employment Retention and Advancement Evaluation (ERA) project. This multisite evaluation seeks to determine the effectiveness and cost-benefits of programs designed to help current or former TANF recipients and low-income workers retain and advance in employment. The ERA project is in the early stages of operation. State and local agencies undertaking retention initiatives need to evaluate their efforts so effective practices can be identified.

Innovative Practices

The **Denver Workforce Initiative** (DWI), a project of the Piton Foundation, is part of the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Jobs Initiative demonstration. DWI has developed innovative training curricula—the *Workin' It Out* training series—for entry-level workers and employers to address performance and retention problems. These cognitive behavioral training programs provide workers and supervisors with the insights and skills to resolve work-related problems and succeed in social interactions. The *Workin' It Out* program helps inexperienced entry-level workers understand the unspoken rules of the workplace and develop basic communication and problem-solving skills. DWI's *Managing to Work It Out* program for supervisors challenges beliefs and biases about work and workers and presents strategies for resolving conflict, communicating with, and motivating entry-level workers. These training programs are designed for delivery at the workplace. The *Learning to Work It Out* program targets individuals with multiple barriers to employment and *Beginning to Work It Out* focuses on at-risk youth. For more information, contact Carol Hedges, director, Denver Workforce Initiative, at 303/825-6246.

With welfare caseloads down 80 percent since 1996, **Florida** recently passed legislation to merge its state workforce and welfare-to-work programs, creating a new public-private entity called Workforce Florida, Inc., effective July 1, 2000. The state is aggressively promoting job retention and career advancement. Its efforts were recognized in December 1999, when the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services awarded Florida a $6.8 million high-performance bonus for achieving the biggest improvement in employment retention and earnings gains. Florida puts money behind job retention by mandating contract payment formulas that tie 25 percent of the contract payment to six months of job retention. This payment structure pushes service providers to improve post-placement efforts aimed at keeping former TANF recipients employed. Florida also works directly with employers to promote employment retention. A Career Launching Demonstration project started in summer 2000 provides cash and tax incentives, as well as training accounts for new employees, to employers who offer career-track jobs with benefits to clients leaving welfare. Workforce 2020, an Orlando Regional Chamber of Commerce initiative funded by the state, has gained national

recognition for helping business owners hire, train, and retain entry-level workers. A new provision in Florida law also makes participation in high school equivalency certificate programs and adult basic education approved primary work activities, enabling clients with significant literacy and education barriers to address those barriers before moving back into the workforce. For more information, contact JenniLee Robins, Workforce Florida, at 813/272-3802.

In **Massachusetts**, the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) is investing resources in retention services to support the increasing number of clients who are moving into the workforce. DTA has directed resources to a Post-Employment Services program to address post-employment service needs and develop job retention services for current and former TANF recipients. DTA has contracted with the service delivery areas (SDAs) that are part of the workforce development system to administer this program. Local needs guide the provision of services. Case management, transitional support services, work expense allowances and incentives, follow-up retention support, and skills enhancement are among the post-employment services that SDAs may provide. Clients can receive post-employment services for up to one year from their TANF case closing. Other initiatives also support employment retention. DTA has an interagency service agreement with the Executive Office of Transportation and Construction for a transportation assistance program, Access to Jobs, to help current and former recipients access transportation to and from child care and work. For recipients with considerable barriers to employment, DTA administers a Supported Work Program. Recipients are placed in highly supportive work sites where they earn wages, in addition to receiving a reduced TANF grant, while making the transition to unsubsidized employment. Current and former recipients can access reemployment services at DTA offices and at one-stop career centers. For more information, contact Margo Blaser, director of the Employment Services Program, Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance, at 617/348-5855.

The **Post-TANF Wrap-Around Fund** administered by the Bergen County Board of Social Services in New Jersey provides assistance to families that are no longer receiving Work First New Jersey (TANF) because of employment. Many recipients are employed in low-paying positions, so this program provides assistance in emergency situations to help former Work First recipients retain their employment. The Post-TANF Wrap-Around Fund provides support to cover sick child care, car repair and insurance, transportation to employment, motel placement because of a natural disaster, security deposit and moving expenses, rent, and retroactive utility expenses. (See the web site for information on payments.) Recipients learn about the fund during job search activities, and the agency conducts outreach to community organizations to inform them about the program. For more information, contact the Work First Unit, Bergen County Board of Social Services, at 201/368-4200; or visit http://www.bcbss.com/wraparound.htm.

The Welfare to Work Partnership launched **Retention and Career Advancement 2000 (RCA 2000)**, an educational campaign, to assist its business partners with retention and career advancement strategies. During the past three years, the Partnership has learned that promoting job retention and career advancement are critical investment strategies for a successful welfare-to-work program. Through the Partnership's web site, publications, and events across the nation, RCA 2000 helps businesses reduce turnover costs and improve performance by keeping new workers on the job. Focusing on a different issue every month, RCA 2000 provides strategies and information to help businesses hire and retain individuals leaving welfare. The issues include helping workers access government supports, such as Medicaid and earned income tax credits, mentoring, child care, and personal financial management. For more information, contact Rob Keast, senior policy associate, at 202/955-3005, ext. 325; or visit http://www.welfaretowork.org/.

The **Rhode Island** Department of Human Services (DHS) created the RIte Works Employment and Retention Services Unit in 1997 to meet the hiring needs of Rhode Island employers and the

employment needs of TANF recipients. This unit is responsible for job development, placement, and retention. The employment and retention specialists work with recipients, employers, and training providers. Retention services are more intensive for at least the first three months and are available for up to 18 months from the date of job placement. Retention services may involve the entire family, not just program participants. Services are targeted to individual needs through an ongoing assessment process that occurs between staff and clients. Developing relationships with employers is a key mission of the RIte Works Employment and Retention Services Unit. Along with helping businesses find work-ready job applicants, RIte Works can provide employers with hiring assistance and financial incentives; education, training, and retention services; support services for employees; and linkages with other services and programs. These services and benefits are marketed to employers. By partnering with employers, RIte Works is able to develop workplace programs that enhance work readiness and job skills. DHS provides employment support services that promote retention, such as child care, health care, and outreach on the earned income tax credit. Child care subsidies and health care coverage are extended to all working families in certain income brackets without time limits. DHS also helps make work pay for low-wage families with a recent policy change that stops the clock on time limits for those working 30 hours or more per week and receiving a supplemental cash grant. For more information, contact June Allen, chief, RIte Works Employment and Retention Services Unit, at 401/462-5369.

The Vocational Foundation, Inc. (VFI), in New York City, provides job training, placement, and retention assistance to at-risk young adults. About one-third of its clients are on public assistance or on a parent's grant. VFI's Moving Up program provides two years of post-placement job retention and career development services, including case management, employer mediation, counseling, and job upgrade assistance. With about 63 percent of its clients still employed after two years, VFI's key focus is achieving results. Guiding principles include stressing outcomes through performance-based management, creating a culture of employment in the program, encouraging relationship-building between staff and clients, developing continuity between pre- and post-employment activities, maintaining a network of services to address a range of needs, cultivating relationships with employers and learning about their needs, and beginning retention early. Incentives such as a small paycheck for program participation and business lunches for working clients help keep clients engaged in the program. Staff adapt post-placement services to the needs of working clients. For an in-depth look at the VFI approach, see *Getting In, Staying On, Moving Up: A Practitioner's Approach to Employment Retention* (Proscio and Elliott, 1999). For more information, contact Mary Bedeau, assistant executive director, Vocational Foundation, Inc., at 212/777-0700.

For More Information...

RESOURCE CONTACTS

Center for Law and Social Policy, contact Julie Strawn, 202/797-6536; or visit http://www.clasp.org/.

The Lewin Group, contact Michael Fishman, 703/269-5655; or visit http://www.lewin.com/.

Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation, contact Charles Michalopoulos, 212/340-8692; or visit http://www.mdrc.org/.

Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., contact Anu Rangarajan, 609/799-3535, or LaDonna Pavetti, 202/484-9220; or visit http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/.

National Governors' Association, contact Rebecca Brown or Susan Golonka, 202/624-5300; or visit http://www.nga.org/.

Public/Private Ventures, contact Carol Clymer, 215/557-4400; or visit http://www.ppv.org/.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, contact Ken Maniha, 202/401-5372; or visit http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/.

U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, Office of Policy and Research, contact Dan Ryan, 202/219-8680; or visit http://www.doleta.gov/.

PUBLICATIONS

Berlin, Gordon L. *Encouraging Work, Reducing Poverty: The Impact of Work Incentive Programs.* New York, N.Y.: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation, March 2000. Available at http://www.mdrc.org/Reports2000/EWORK-RPOVERTY.pdf.

Brown, Rebecca, Evelyn Ganzglass, Susan Golonka, Jill Hyland, and Martin Simon. *Working Out of Poverty: Employment Retention and Career Advancement for Welfare Recipients.* Washington, D.C.: National Governors' Association, July 1998. Available at http://www.nga.org/Welfare/EmploymentRetention.htm.

Clymer, Carol, Brandon Roberts, and Julie Strawn. *Working for Change: State Policies and Programs to Help Low-Wage Workers Maintain Steady Employment and Advance.* Philadelphia, Pa.: Public/Private Ventures, in press.. Visit http://www.ppv.org/.

Fishman, Michael E., Burt S. Barnow, Karen N. Gardiner, Barbara J. Murphy, and Stephanie A. Laud. *Job Retention and Advancement among Welfare Recipients: Challenges and Opportunities.* Falls Church, Va.: The Lewin Group, January 1999. Available at http://www.lewin.com/library\documents\ACF_Research_Synthesis_(website).pdf.

Hershey, Alan, and LaDonna Pavetti. "Turning Job Finders into Job Keepers." *The Future of Children*, vol. 7, no.1 (spring 1997).
Available at http://www.futureofchildren.org/wtw/007_wtw.pdf.

Hill, Heather, and LaDonna Pavetti. *Using Incentives to Promote Job Retention and Advancement: Guidance from the Performance Improvement Industry.* Washington, D.C.: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., May 2000. Available at http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/incentives.pdf.

Murphy, Barbara J., Michael E. Fishman, and Burt S. Barnow. *Program Design Manual—Employment Retention and Advancement Project.* Falls Church, Va.: The Lewin Group, December 1999. Available at http://www.lewin.com/library\documents\ACF_Program_Design_Manual.pdf.

Nightingale, Demetra, Terri Thompson, Nancy Pindus, Pamela Holcomb, Edgar Lee, Jesse Valente, and John Trutko. *Early Implementation of the Welfare-to-Work Grants Program: Findings from Exploratory Site Visits and Review of Program Plans.* Princeton, N.J.: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., February 2000.
Available at http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/congress-ui.pdf.

Proscio, Tony, and Mark Elliott. *Getting In, Staying On, Moving Up: A Practitioner's Approach to Employment Retention.* Philadelphia, Pa.: Public/Private Ventures, winter 1999. Available at http://www.ppv.org/content/reports/movingup.html.

Rangarajan, Anu. *Keeping Welfare Recipients Employed: A Guide for States Designing Job Retention Services.* Princeton, N.J.: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., June 1998. Available at http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/PESDEMP.PDF.

Rangarajan, Anu. *Staying On, Moving Up: Strategies to Help Entry-Level Workers Retain Employment and Advance in Their Jobs.* Forthcoming. To obtain an advance copy, contact the author at Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., at 609/799-3535.

Rangarajan, Anu, Peter Schochet, and Dexter Chu. *Employment Experiences of Welfare Recipients Who Find Jobs: Is Targeting Possible?* Princeton, N.J.: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., August 1998. Available at http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/EMP-EXP.PDF.

Rangarajan, Anu, and Tim Novak. *The Struggle to Sustain Employment: The Effectiveness of the Postemployment Services Demonstration.* Princeton, N.J.: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., April 1999. Available at http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/strug-rpt.pdf.

Strawn, Julie, and Karin Martinson. *Steady Work and Better Jobs: How to Help Low-Income Parents Sustain Employment and Advance in the Workforce.* New York, N.Y.: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation, June 2000.
Available at http://www.mdrc.org/Reports2000/SteadyWorkGuide.pdf.

The Welfare Information Network is supported by grants from the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the Woods Fund of Chicago, the Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and the U.S. Department of Labor

April Kaplan- "akaplan@financeproject.org", Program Manager, WIN
Michelle Ganow- "mganow@financeproject.org", Child Care, Child Development, Child Support
Pamala Friedman- "pfriedman@financeproject.org", Income Disregard and Self-employment
Iyauta Moore- "imoore@financeproject.org", Child Welfare, Teen Parents and Youth Development
Nanette Relave- "nrelave@financeproject.org", Welfare-to-Work and Workforce Issues
Ivory Copeland- "icopeland@financeproject.org", Time Limits, Sanctions and Research
Gretchen Greiner- "ggreiner@financeproject.org", Food Stamps, Health Care and Rural Issues
LaShawn Dickey- "ldickey@financeproject.org" and Sylvia Belton- "sbelton@financeproject.org, Administrative Staff

1000 Vermont Ave., NW - Suite 600
Washington, DC 20005